

the point of lurching back into its old habits of blood and gore, in a new era of mob rule.

U.S. CHILLY ON SUBJECT OF RIOS MONTT

The U.S., along with the United Nations, has been notably critical of the human rights abuses that continue to plague Guatemala's fragile democracy. The State Department condemned the riots and the lack of effort by the authorities to control the violence. Earlier, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher had indicated his disapproval of Rios Montt's candidacy, asserting that should Rios Montt be elected, "realistically, in light of Mr. Rios Montt's background, it would be difficult to have the kind of relationship that we would prefer." This followed statements earlier in the year by U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala John Hamilton that noted a troubling lack of compliance on the part of the government with the 1996 UN-brokered peace accord. In an admirable display of candor about the deteriorating situation in Guatemala, Hamilton stated that, "My government shares the Guatemalan people's concern that today, more than six years after the end of the armed conflict, there are still serious violations of human rights."

It is crucially important that the U.S. maintain this strong stance in opposition to the candidacy of such a brutal ex-dictator and avoid the temptation to paper over the crimes of Rios Montt in order to ensure Guatemala's inclusion in the upcoming Central American Free Trade Agreement negotiations, scheduled to be completed by the end of this year. Last January, the Bush administration announced its decision to decertify Guatemala for insufficient progress in the war on drugs. Subsequently, it made use of a "vital national interest waiver" to continue to provide economic aid to the country in spite of the decertification. While continuance of such assistance provides some valuable leverage for the U.S. to exercise, as it seeks to pressure the Guatemalan government to bring human rights violators to justice, rein in corruption and ensure an orderly democratic transition after the November elections, this is the case only if the White House indicates that it is prepared to advance the country's democratization. If the White House wishes to demonstrate that its concern for human rights extends beyond Iraq, then there can be no more appropriate task than to facilitate the unhindered operation of justice in Guatemala, a country that has seen precious little of it up to now.

TRIBUTE TO SAMMY HUDSON

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 2003

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to stand before this body of Congress and this nation today to pay tribute to a man who has spent his life providing a valuable service to others. Sammy Hudson of Grand Junction, Colorado has shined the shoes of thousands of community members and visitors, providing everyone with great service and pleasant conversation. For his years of service to the community, along with his hard work and dedication, I am honored to recognize Sammy here today.

Sammy began shinning shoes as a nine-year-old boy in Chicago, learning the craft

from his grandfather. He has spent the last 23 years working in Grand Junction, and today, as the only traditional shoe-shiner in Grand Junction, Sammy provides a valuable service to his customers. His six decades of experience, along with a rigorous attention to detail and engaging personality, enable Sammy to brighten up the lives of numerous customers while simultaneously making a living doing something he enjoys.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Sammy Hudson for his service to the Grand Junction community. Sammy serves as an example of the kind of resourcefulness, hard work, and dedication that have helped to make this country great. Recognition for the outstanding service he provides is long overdue, and I am privileged to bring Sammy's story to the attention of this body of Congress today.

RECOGNIZING THE 2003 IMMIGRANT WORKERS FREEDOM RIDE

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 2003

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to recognize one of the most significant civil rights movements I have had the privilege of supporting. On September 20, 2003, buses in nine major U.S. cities will take hundreds of immigrant workers and their allies on a cross country expedition to Washington, D.C. and New York City. The Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride of 2003 will mark an important moment in the history of our great nation.

Inspired by the freedom rides of the 1960s, the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride (IWFR) will promote the civil rights of our immigrant population and help educate the public and elected officials about new requirements in immigration policy. IWFR hopes to help immigrant workers, living and paying taxes in the United States, to: (1) legalize their status; (2) have a clear road to citizenship; (3) reunify their families; (4) have a voice on the job regardless of legal status; and (5) enjoy full protection of the civil rights and civil liberties for all.

I also want to recognize the exceptional leadership of Maria Elena Durazo, David Glaser, and the sponsoring committees and individuals of the IWFR. Without their hard work the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride would not be possible. These two individuals and their sponsors exemplify the true meaning of leadership and stewardship.

The IWFR will not only help draw a new map for U.S. immigrants seeking citizenship, but it will also celebrate the American dream, the dream of becoming a citizen of the United States of America.

I am privileged to recognize the 2003 Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride as an excellent example of the freedom our great country provides.

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO DENNIS HALES, TREASURER OF FULTON COUNTY, OH, ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 2003

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct privilege to stand before my colleagues in the House to pay tribute to a distinguished public servant from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. Fulton County Treasurer Dennis Hales earlier announced his retirement, effective today, after ten years of distinguished local government service.

Dennis Hales moved to Fulton County in 1969. Prior to his service in the Fulton County Courthouse, he served in the Evergreen School District, as Evergreen High School Principal for six years, then for four years as Evergreen School District Superintendent. He continued his leadership role in Fulton County's schools, serving three years as Principal of Wauseon High School and for several more years as the assistant superintendent at Four County Career Center.

He assumed the office of Fulton County Treasurer in 1993. As Treasurer, Mr. Hales oversaw property and personal property tax collections and manufactured housing tax collections. He managed the investment of excess county funds, earning an average of \$1 million annually for Fulton County.

In addition to his distinguished service as a county officeholder, Dennis Hales also contributed his leadership philanthropically to the community. As Chairman of the United Way, Dennis Hales played a major role in merging several communities' efforts into one county-wide organization, increasing donations and consequently, enhancing services provided to County residents. He was selected Honorary Chairman of the 2002-2003 Fulton County United Way Campaign.

Dennis Hales has also been recognized as the Wauseon Chamber of Commerce's Citizen of the Year.

Despite his many accolades, Dennis Hales has never sought personal recognition. Rather, he derives his energy from his dedication to Fulton County and his desire to work with his neighbors to build a stronger community.

As he enters this new period in his life, Dennis Hales remains a dedicated family man. He and his loving wife Janice are planning to travel and spend time with his children and grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, the quality of our communities has long been based on the character and selfless service of our citizens. Fulton County, Ohio is a far richer community because of the work and dedication of Dennis Hales. I ask each of my colleagues to join me in this special tribute. We wish the entire Hales family good health and good fortune in the coming years.